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Local Businesses Take Meadowlands Challenge *Companies Seek Ways to Reduce Energy Consumption, Fight Global Warming*

LYNDHURST, N.J. – Area businesses are stepping up to take the Meadowlands Challenge, a friendly competition sponsored by the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission (NJMC) that can help companies of any size become more energy-efficient. So far, 10 businesses – including two major developers and four local hotels – have pledged to examine how they can recycle more, consume less or embrace other environmentally friendly practices.

“We commend those businesses that have joined the Meadowlands Challenge and are committed to reducing their energy consumption and sharing their best-practices with others,” said Joseph Doria, Chairman of the NJMC and Commissioner of the state Department of Community Affairs. “By conserving energy and operating more efficiently, businesses can make a positive impact on both the environment and their bottom line.”

Those who take the challenge are asked to develop a list of goals and action items to increase energy efficiency and become more sustainable with their operations. Participants then compete against themselves to reach those goals; those who see the greatest percentage in energy reduction will be recognized by the NJMC later this year. Commission staff is available to assist businesses in formulating goals and measuring improvements.

Businesses can pursue green practices in such areas as energy conservation, water conservation, recycling, commuting alternatives, and through other sustainable actions. Initiatives can be of any scale, from turning off computers at the end of the day and encouraging employees to carpool, to implementing a green purchasing policy and investing in solar power. Projects will be shared among participants so that everyone can benefit from the variety of green ideas.

In addition to helping businesses go green, the NJMC is leading by example when it comes to saving energy. The Commission conducted an energy audit last year and installed energy efficient lighting, has expanded its

recycling policy, and is now working on a major solar project. The energy efficient design and other sustainable features of the NJMC's Center for Environmental and Scientific Education were also recognized when the U.S. Green Building Council certified the building LEED platinum in April, making the classroom the only public building in the state to achieve this highest rating.

"The Meadowlands Challenge is a great example of the NJMC's ongoing commitment to working with local businesses and District Municipalities to help foster a vibrant economic – and environmental – climate in the Meadowlands District," said Robert Ceberio, Executive Director of the NJMC. "By working together we can all help position the Meadowlands as an economic engine and natural gem for years to come."

Companies who have signed up for the Meadowlands Challenge include:

Argo Turboserve Corporation, Lyndhurst
Comprehensive Behavioral Healthcare, Lyndhurst
Courtyard By Marriott, Lyndhurst
Courtyard By Marriott, Secaucus
Hartz Mountain Industries, Secaucus
Mail Direct Office Solutions, Lyndhurst
Metropolitan Exposition, Moonachie
Renaissance Meadowlands Hotel, Rutherford
Russo Development, Hackensack
Sheridan Meadowlands Hotel and Convention Center, East Rutherford

Businesses in the Meadowlands Area that wish to participate in the Meadowlands Challenge can find more information about the program and sign-up forms on the Meadowlands Regional Chamber of Commerce Web site, at www.meadowlands.org/mrcc/meadowlandschallenge.html, or by contacting Debbie Lawlor, NJMC Chief of Sustainability and Economic Growth, at 201-460-4671 or debbie.lawlor@njmeadowlands.gov.

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